**TREES IN/AND/AROUND LITERATURE IN THE ANTHROPOCENE**

**University of Turin, Italy**

**21st May 2019**

“I’m interested in the particularity of each Tree – it’s ‘thisness’ (*haecceitas*)”, claims Canadian land-artist, photographer, and poet Marlene Creates, thus hinting both at the specificity of each singular tree and at the uniqueness of certain species at different latitudes. Literature, among other arts, such as film, photography, the fine arts, is one of those privileged terrainswhere Trees definitely enter our field of vision, our epistemic knowledge, our sensorial experience. In literary and artistic productions, Trees are ethically and aesthetically called into question (evoked, invoked, iconized, prized, even attacked), with the aim to identify, describe, or allegorize their singularities and specificities, or to pay homage to their material, literal, cultural, ethnic, and symbolic meaning through a variety of textualities, including the new media.

Similarly, pioneering forest ecologist Nalini Nadkarni reminds us that in order to be fully understood and appreciated Trees should be looked at in multiple ways, thus fostering the interplay of science and the humanities. Intertwining the symbolic with the personal, the scientific with the spiritual, the mythic with the functional, Nadkarni invites us to consider a Tree as *axis mundi*, an imaginary line that connects Earth and Sky, but also the individual with the communal. Trees, in fact, are at once single entities and part of a wider community and environment that secretly communicate with each other (Wohlleben 2016, Mancuso 2017) through their roots and a fungal network nicknamed Wood Wide Web. Silently and invisibly, trees share information, register pain, learn things, and even protect themselves and each other to the point of becoming arboreal cybercrimes by hijacking the whole system and sabotaging their rivals. Finally, Trees are sites of *naturecultural* memory: their rings record generations of human and nonhuman encounters and narrations, together with their mutual interference in the shaping of our identities.

The aim of this one-day international and interdisciplinary colloquium is to attract scholars, artists, experts in various fields to explore and assess the presence, value and stance of Trees and Tree-like epistemic structures (arborescence vs ryzome, tree-shaped flows) in the Anthropocene. It is intended that selected papers will be developed as chapters for an international publication.

Proposals from any discipline are invited and may address but are not limited to the following topics:

Trees and their representations in literatures and the arts

Metamorphoses of humans and non-humans into trees

New (invented/fantastic) species vs extinctions of Trees

Trees and identity, ethnicity, nationality

Trees in the visual, new media worlds

Dendrocommunication: the Wood-Wide-Web

Trees and time, age, forms of temporalities

Memorial trees: historical and *naturecultural* memory

Please submit a 250-word paper proposal and a short biographical note by **15th February** **2019** to Carmen Concilio (carmen.concilio@unito.it) and Daniela Fargione (daniela.fargione@unito.it)

**Carmen CONCILIO** is Associate Professor of English and postcolonial literature at the Department of Modern Language, Literature and Cultures – University of Turin. Her research fields include British Modernism, Postcolonial Studies, Environmental Humanities, Digital Humanities, Literature and Photography, Ageing Studies, Partnership Studies, Migration Studies. Her most recent publications, as both author and editor, include: *Word and Image in Literature and the Visual Arts* (Mimesis International 2016); *Imagining Ageing. Representations of Age and Ageing in Anglophone Literatures* (Transcript, 2018). With Daniela Fargione, she co-edited *Antroposcenari. Storie, paesaggi, ecologie* (Il Mulino 2018).

**Daniela FARGIONE** is aformer Fulbright scholar at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, where she earned her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature and current Assistant Professor at the University of Turin, where she teaches American Literatures. Her main research interests include: translation studies (theory and practice of literary translation), the interconnections of modern and contemporary American literatures and the other arts (music and photography in particular), environmental humanities (food and migrations). Her recent publications include *Antroposcenari. Storie, paesaggi, ecologie* (Il Mulino 2018) co-edited with Carmen Concilio and *ContaminAzioni ecologiche: cibi, nature e culture* (Led 2015) co-edited with Serenella Iovino. She is one of the two current translators of Julian Barnes’s works (Einaudi Editore).